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Summary record of the 33rd meeting
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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Sene

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/72/L.40: Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis
(A/72/7/Add.46; A/C.5/72/22)

1. **Mr. Guazo** (Acting Deputy Controller), introducing the statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/72/L.40 (A/C.5/72/22), said that, should it adopt the draft resolution, the General Assembly would approve the one-day high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, to be convened by the President of the General Assembly in New York on the second day of the Assembly's general debate at its seventy-third session. Consequently, additional resources in the amount of $59,700 would be required, in order to cover costs related to the organization and servicing of the meeting. Those requirements would be reflected under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 28, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

2. **Mr. Sene** (Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.46), said that, as the requested resources represented a low proportion of the amounts appropriated under the corresponding budget sections, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to absorb the additional requirements under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 28, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. While Secretariat departments had sometimes in the past absorbed resource requirements arising from new or expanded activities during the course of a biennium, the Advisory Committee recognized that, should resource requirements arise from further unplanned activities, it might not be possible to absorb them in their entirety during the biennium 2018–2019.

3. **Mr. Ahmed** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the organization of the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, a preventable and curable disease. As the meeting would be the first of its kind, the Group was eager to ensure the fulfillment of all requirements connected with the holding of the event and expected participating global leaders to adopt a strong political declaration to address the tuberculosis epidemic. Urgent efforts must be made to facilitate access to affordable medicines and technologies, encourage innovation in prevention and treatment, and scale up financing, including at the international level, with a view to ending the epidemic by 2030. The Group was in favour of the proposed additional resource requirements, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, and underscored the need to provide adequate regular budget resources for the implementation of all mandates approved by United Nations intergovernmental bodies.

4. **Mr. Kumar** (India) said that, according to the World Health Organization, tuberculosis was one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide, ahead of HIV and malaria, being contracted each year by approximately 10.4 million people, of whom 1.8 million died. It was therefore more critical than ever to step up global efforts to prevent, detect and treat the disease. At a summit to eradicate tuberculosis held in New Delhi in March 2018, the Prime Minister of India had launched a campaign to eliminate the epidemic in India by 2025 through a strengthened approach. Under the campaign, the Government would provide $100 million per year to address the nutritional needs of patients suffering from tuberculosis, and a tuberculosis research consortium had been established to facilitate the technological innovation required to improve diagnosis and treatment. His delegation attached great importance to the organization of the United Nations high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis.

Agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Results of the survey to support the review of the standard rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries (A/72/728 and A/72/771)

5. **Mr. Martin** (Department of Field Support), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the results of the survey to support the review of the standard rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries (A/72/728), recalled that, on the basis of the recommendations contained in the report of the Senior Advisory Group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/289 (A/C.5/67/10), the General Assembly had, in its resolution 67/261, established a framework to inform its periodic consideration of the rate of reimbursement to

troop- and police-contributing countries through a quadrennial survey on the common and essential additional costs incurred by a sample of 10 troop- and police-contributing countries. After considering the results of the first such survey, the Assembly, in its resolution 68/281, had established a new standard rate of reimbursement, subject to a series of phased increases. The rate currently stood at $1,410 dollars per person per month, and would remain so until further revised by the Assembly.

6. The current report (A/72/728) outlined the data collected from the second survey, which reflected the costs incurred by a newly selected sample of 10 troop-contributing countries, namely, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay. In line with the framework endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 67/261, those countries accounted for more than 50 per cent of the total number of contingent personnel deployed over the three years prior to the survey and represented the four World Bank income categories in proportion to the total number of United Nations peacekeeping personnel contributed by countries belonging to each of those income categories. Furthermore, as mandated in that resolution, information had been collected on costs related to allowances, personal kit and equipment, predeployment medical expenses, predeployment inland transportation and United Nations-specific predepoyment training. After receiving the preliminary responses of participating countries to a questionnaire requesting data related to those areas of expenditure, experts from the Secretariat had visited each country with a view to ensuring that a complete and consistent approach was used to collecting data.

7. To ensure a rigorous approach to data collection and allow adequate time to complete the survey, June 2017 had been used as the base month. The report provided average monthly cost data weighted by the overall contributions of each participating country to United Nations peacekeeping in order to provide a more accurate picture of the typical costs incurred by troop-contributing countries. The weighted average across all five cost categories amounted to approximately $1,428 per person per month. In line with the Senior Advisory Group's recommendations and in view of participating countries' concerns regarding the confidentiality and sensitivity of the data collected, the information presented in the report was not associated with individual countries and all data provided had been treated as confidential. To ensure comparability, the Secretariat had worked with participating countries to isolate specific common costs to the extent possible. Information on costs outside the five categories mandated by the General Assembly was presented in chapter IV of the report. The report also highlighted that, while 9 of the 10 participating countries deployed female uniformed personnel and, in the preliminary questionnaire, participating countries had been asked to provide information on costs related to their deployment, very few costs specific to the deployment of female peacekeepers had been incurred. The active engagement of participating countries in the survey process, following the significant changes proposed by the 2017 Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, demonstrated the centrality of reimbursement to the peacekeeping partnership.

8. **Mr. Sene** (Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/771), said that the Advisory Committee was of the view that the actions to be taken regarding the review of the rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries constituted policy matters to be decided by the General Assembly. He noted that, upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee had been informed that, on the basis of certain criteria and assumptions, the potential financial implications of an increase of $1 in the current rate of reimbursement would amount to approximately $1 million per year.

9. **Mr. Ahmed** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to preserving the integrity of the methodology for reviewing the rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 67/261. The periodic review and adjustment of the reimbursement rate was imperative, as troop-contributing countries had had to increase their investment to address the contemporary challenges of peacekeeping, in particular by enhancing troops' capacity to protect civilians and to respond to increasing direct threats to their security and that of other United Nations personnel and United Nations property. He expressed the Group's appreciation to the countries that had participated in the second quadrennial survey and to the Secretary-General for ensuring the confidentiality of the data collected. The Group also welcomed the collaboration between the Secretariat and the Contingent-Owned Equipment/Memorandum of Understanding Management Review Board recently established at Headquarters in ensuring that the approved survey methodology was followed and that the information was, to the extent possible, complete, consistent and in accordance with the criteria established by the General Assembly. The new methodology would benefit peacekeeping personnel,

who faced ever greater demands in their efforts to promote international peace and security.

10. The Group was encouraged by the increase in the number of female uniformed peacekeepers deployed in contingents from approximately 3,800 in January 2014 to 4,300 in December 2017, and urged their increased participation. In order to take into account the needs of female personnel, information on costs specific to their deployment, in particular those related to predeployment medical care, personal kit and equipment, and the need for dedicated accommodation and other facilities, should be included in the Secretariat's next review. Costs associated with post-deployment processes, including demobilization and medical examinations and procedures specific to service in United Nations peacekeeping operations, in particular psychological examinations and counselling, should also be taken to account in future surveys. In informal consultations, the Group would seek further information regarding the weighted average cost of $1,427.80 per person per month incurred by troop-contributing countries in relation to the current rate of reimbursement of $1,410 per person per month; variation in the types of, and the approaches taken in determining, additional allowances paid for service in United Nations peacekeeping operations; overlap between and among cost categories; and costs outside the five categories mandated by the General Assembly and the level of standardization of those costs.

11. **Ms. Lee** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), expressed appreciation to the countries that had participated in the second quadrennial survey to support the review of the standard rate of reimbursement and welcomed the efforts made to ensure the confidentiality of the data provided. ASEAN also welcomed the collaboration between the Secretariat and the Headquarters Contingent-Owned Equipment/Memorandum of Understanding Management Review Board, composed of military, police, logistical, political and financial experts. In its discussions on the current agenda item, the General Assembly should not focus on costs to the exclusion of the real contributions and sacrifices made by peacekeepers.

12. ASEAN welcomed the increase in the number of female peacekeepers deployed over the past four years and supported further efforts to increase the number and role of women in peacekeeping operations. To that end, costs specific to their deployment should be incorporated in the next survey, in line with the Organization's efforts to promote gender parity and the role of women in advancing peace and security. Future surveys should also include data on costs associated with the post-deployment phase.

13. **Mr. De Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, paid tribute to United Nations peacekeepers who had sacrificed their lives in the cause of peace. Firmly committed to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/261, the States members of the European Union and the other countries on whose behalf he was speaking welcomed the improved quality and reliability of the data sets presented in the Secretary-General's report (A/72/728) and commended the participants in the second quadrennial survey.

14. The reforms proposed by the Secretary-General would make the United Nations more responsive and effective, improve delivery of services to the field, and establish a robust framework for political action to underpin the Organization's efforts at the country and regional levels within an increasingly challenging global context. To respond to those challenges, a policy framework on the performance of peacekeeping missions, in particular of troops, should be developed through consultations between the Secretariat and all stakeholders; contingent-owned equipment should be up to date; a policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse should be applied; and gender balance should be achieved in peacekeeping missions. In addition, Member States must support the Organization's efforts to address the increasing challenges to the safety and security of peacekeeping troops, in line with the priorities outlined in the report on improving the security of United Nations peacekeepers prepared by the former Force Commander of two United Nations peacekeeping missions, Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz. Furthermore, a clear and transparent methodology for measuring the performance of peacekeepers would be critical to ensuring professionalism, accountability and transparency.

15. His delegation and the other delegations on whose behalf he was speaking had a specific interest in supporting strong and effective United Nations peacekeeping operations. Almost all of the European Union member States provided not only significant financial resources, but also uniformed personnel and other capabilities, to peacekeeping missions. To fulfil their political and operational commitment to peacekeeping, Member States must ensure that they made the most effective contribution possible, bearing in mind the potentially heavy budget implications at a

time of scarce resources, with the ultimate goal of maintaining and reinforcing the quality and sustainability of peacekeeping operations.

16. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America), paying tribute to United Nations peacekeepers who had sacrificed their lives in the cause of peace, said that peacekeeping must continue to serve as a tool for addressing conflict and protecting civilians. General Assembly resolution 67/261 had been essential to strengthening the peacekeeping partnership, and her delegation remained committed to implementing the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, in particular on the revised survey process. She appreciated the Secretary-General's commitment to producing high-quality and reliable survey data and welcomed the timely and thorough completion of the second quadrennial survey by participating countries. Her delegation would continue to examine the survey results in order to determine whether an increase in the reimbursement rate was justified. It would also continue to support the Organization's efforts to align accountability with responsibility and identify and implement clear peacekeeping performance standards to ensure effective mandate delivery in the light of evolving challenges. Specifically, the United Nations needed to do more to enhance transparency, in particular by upholding a policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse.

17. **Mr. Kumar** (India) said that, as the largest cumulative contributor of United Nations peacekeeping troops, India had provided almost 200,000 troops, of whom 168 had lost their lives, to nearly 50 of the 71 peacekeeping missions mandated in the preceding six decades, including 13 current missions. His country was therefore deeply conscious of the complexities and challenges faced by peacekeepers. At a time when troop-contributing countries were being asked to provide properly equipped and well-trained troops to implement increasingly complex mandates, recognition of the importance of reimbursement remained inadequate. Notwithstanding the critical importance of clear mandates, up-to-date guidelines and policies from the Secretariat, and leadership and accountability at all levels, adequate resources must be available to support peacekeeping troops. To that end, having served in the Senior Advisory Group and having participated in the first two quadrennial surveys, his Government attached great importance to the methodology for reviewing the rate of reimbursement endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 67/261.

18. Having deployed in Liberia the first ever female formed police unit, India welcomed the increase in the number of female uniformed peacekeepers deployed between 2014 and 2017 and called for the inclusion in future surveys of data on costs specific to their deployment. It also supported the inclusion of information on costs associated with the post-deployment phase. Moreover, there was an urgent need to review the process for the payment of compensation in cases of death and disability sustained by uniformed personnel, particularly in view of the record number of fatal casualties and drastic increase in targeted attacks against United Nations peacekeepers in recent years. Timely settlement of outstanding payments to countries that had contributed troops to active and closed missions was also imperative.

19. **Mr. Wen** Dong (China) said that the establishment of sound and reasonable standard rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries would facilitate peacekeeping budgeting and protect the rights and interests of, and ensure better and more efficient support for, peacekeeping troops. China was the second largest contributor to the peacekeeping budget and a major troop contributor, with over 2,600 peacekeepers active in 10 missions. It had also registered with the United Nations an 8,000-troop peacekeeping standby force, some of whose members were deployable on short notice. In addition, in line with its commitment to enhancing the safety of United Nations peacekeepers, his Government, through the recently established China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund, had funded the completion of the research presented in the report of Lieutenant General Santos Cruz on improving security conditions in peacekeeping operations.

20. **Mr. Gohar** (Pakistan) said that the methodology endorsed in General Assembly resolution 67/261 was essential to ensuring an effective, equitable and predictable reimbursement system that would enable the Organization to attract and retain well-trained and properly equipped peacekeeping personnel. He was grateful to the Secretariat for selecting Pakistan for participation in the second quadrennial survey and to the other countries that had participated. Pakistan was one of the largest and most consistent contributors to United Nations peacekeeping, having contributed troops to 41 missions in 23 countries since 1960, with 6,000 troops currently deployed in active missions. A total of 156 Pakistani peacekeepers had made the ultimate sacrifice, a testament to his country's commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

21. His delegation would seek further clarification on how the data collected from the latest survey had been used to determine the new standard reimbursement rate of $1,427.80 per person per month. In future surveys,

the Secretary-General should take into account the costs specific to the deployment of female personnel and costs outside the five categories mandated by the General Assembly. As underscored in the report of Lieutenant General Santos Cruz, since 1948, more than 3,500 United Nations peacekeepers had lost their lives in the line of duty, with 943 killed as a result of violent acts. Between 2013 and 2017, there had been a consistent increase in the number of peacekeeping fatalities resulting from violent acts, amounting to a total of 195 deaths. In that regard, he expressed concern that there had been no review of the process for the payment of compensation in cases of service-related death and disability since 2009 and urged the General Assembly to approve an increase in the level of compensation.

22. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia) expressed appreciation to those countries that deployed peacekeepers around the world, including the countries that had participated in the second quadrennial survey to support the review of the standard rate of reimbursement. Policies must be reviewed periodically to enable peacekeeping operations to respond effectively to multidimensional threats and challenges. Her delegation supported the cooperation between the Secretariat and the Headquarters Contingent-Owned Equipment/Memorandum of Understanding Management Review Board in the interest of ensuring that survey data were objective, representative and comprehensive.

23. Establishing an equitable and predictable reimbursement system for troop-contributing countries would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Priority should be given to improving the safety and security of peacekeepers; ensuring that they were well-trained, well-equipped and well-informed; and increasing the role of women in peacekeeping missions. Adequate consideration should also be given to the challenges specific to the post-deployment phase, in particular the physical and mental toll of peacekeeping operations on individuals.

24. **Mr. Shilla** (United Republic of Tanzania) noted with appreciation that the United Republic of Tanzania had been selected to participate in the second quadrennial survey, which had been conducted in a thorough, professional and transparent manner and had resulted in recommendations for improvements in the emoluments paid to the troops contributed by his country.

25. Following the General Assembly's endorsement of the report of the 2017 Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment (A/C.5/71/20), which had resulted in the implementation of new rates of reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment, with effect from July 2017, his delegation expected that, at its current session, the Fifth Committee would review not only the rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries but also issues related to the emoluments paid to peacekeeping personnel. Particular consideration should be given to the risks faced by troops serving in units with a special mandate to undertake targeted offensive operations, such as the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). In addition, troops in United Nations special forces units should receive a special allowance reflecting the operational risk environments in which they served; the rate of compensation for service-related death and disability should be reviewed and increased; and an increase in the daily allowance for uniformed personnel should be considered.

26. Proportional deductions to personnel reimbursement on account of absent or non-functional contingent-owned equipment, as specified in the memorandums of understanding between troop contributors and the Secretariat, should be discontinued. Contingents always carried out most of their functions even when some equipment was absent or non-functional, and, in the absence of certain equipment, troops were required to perform their tasks using other contingents' equipment. Moreover, such deductions prevented troop-contributing countries from adequately addressing shortfalls in equipment and sustaining their troops. Peacekeepers need not be penalized, as they performed their functions with great diligence and professionalism and endured significant hardship and danger in the cause of peace.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.